

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Embodiments of the present invention provide for a method, system and article of manufacture for operating vending machines. In general, a plurality of vending machines are nodes of a network. Each node is configured to send, receive and process signals carrying inventory, pricing, reservation and/or refund information. In such embodiments, a vending machine is configured to receive a reservation request for a specified item. The request may be issued from one of a plurality of client devices (e.g., wireless telephones, desktop computers and the like) or from a reservation control system. In still another embodiment, vending machines may be configured to provide refunds under controlled conditions. A consumer may request a refund in cases where the consumer was improperly charged for goods or services that were not provided.

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